



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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More Efficient Use of Water Leads to Greater Yields for Farmers in Tanzania



USUN Rome

A new holding pond in Oitera Village in Tanzania is helping smallholder farmers keep crops continuously irrigated.

The smallholder farmers of Oitera Village in the Arusha District of Tanzania have a system of small irrigation canals and receive irrigation water once a week from the government.

But in the heat of the Tanzanian growing season, this schedule put their young crops through a weekly flood and drought cycle, resulting in weak plants and low yields.

With the help of a Feed the Future program to increase agricultural productivity, the 40 members of the farmers' association built a small holding pond in which to store their irrigation water. Now when the water arrives, it is directed into the pond and small portions are siphoned off each day to a drip irrigation system that the farmers installed, ensuring continuous, even moisture for crops throughout the growing season. The pond holds 63 cubic meters of water, enough to irrigate three acres for a week.

As part of a comprehensive program that also includes improved approaches to growing seedlings and better spacing of plants, the water storage has helped farmers increase their harvest of onions, cabbage, potatoes and beans. Instead of barely scraping by, last August the farmers harvested 24 tons of vegetables and made a profit of \$11,300 from the resulting sales, an impressive outcome in a country where most people live on a little over one dollar a day.